

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LIBRARY, WELLINGTON.—PAST AND PRESENT.

By J. O. Wilson, A.L.A., General Assembly Library.

## PART II.—Concluded.

The fact that the General Assembly Library was predominantly for the use of members of Parliament had its effect on the character of the stock. Though it has a sound classical basis, the Sociology, History and Biography selections are excellent. The Library is also proud of its newspaper collection, which includes many newspapers from the commencement of publishing in New Zealand. Though some of the files are incomplete, this is nevertheless by far the best collection in New Zealand. During the last year over 200 volumes were added.

In addition to purchase there are two other methods of book acquisition. The first is copy-right. Under the Act publishers must present to the Library two copies of each book, pamphlet, etc., published in New Zealand. Each year a list containing the authors, titles and prices of these publications is issued and distributed to the chief libraries of the world. The books received under this Act are the basis of the New Zealand collection wherein they are preserved both for present and future use. This collection is strictly reference. The other source is International Exchange. Under agreement with Great Britain, the other Dominions and Colonies, and the United States, the New Zealand Government presents copies of its official publications and in return receives copies of their publications. These are deposited in the General Assembly Library. This section includes debates, gazettes, statutes, Parliamentary papers, etc.—many of the sets going back to

the middle of the last century, and certain of the British papers further than this. There is also a complete set of New Zealand official publications.

A most important part of the work of the Library is the supplying of information to Members of Parliament. For this purpose special tools have been developed. A vertical file in which are stored clippings from various newspapers, pamphlets and other ephemeral material. An index to news and other items appearing in the daily newspapers, and another index to articles appearing in magazines is kept. These, as also is the special New Zealand portrait collection, are kept in a special room, known as the Reference Room.

Other phases of the Library's work include the archives, a map collection, the issue of reading matter to Members during recess, and, most important of all to the public, the issue of recess privileges. On the recommendation of a Member of Parliament, privilege holders are allowed to borrow from the Library during recess two books at a time.

Originally on the lines of the private gentleman's library concerned with the classics, the General Assembly has now to deal with all the complex problems of modern government, and is staffed and arranged to meet this need. In common with the Alexander Turnbull Library, and the Country Library Service, it is preparing to fill its part in the National Library of the future with all the extra services that this will entail.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor,  
NEW ZEALAND LIBRARIES.

Dear Sir,—

I was pleased to read the thoughtful letter of your correspondent "Interested" in the Bulletin for last month. The letter is well timed and demonstrates the pressing need for the Library Association to formulate systematic training for the profession of librarianship. At each of the last two Conferences of the Association I have endeavoured to get the Association to turn its efforts toward the inauguration of a comprehensive scheme of training which would give the candidate professional status. A fundamental defect in the outline of training

proposed by "Interested" is that the possession of two "tickets" would place its possessor at a dead end if he wished to attain the higher positions in the library service. With such qualifications as "assistant librarian" and "qualified librarian" (N.Z.) the unfortunate possessor would find his qualification had no recognition outside his own country. The outlined scheme fails to take any account of already existing facilities of education in New Zealand, and of the long struggle for the recognition of librarianship as a profession which has taken place both in England and America. I believe that the Association would miss a great opportunity, if it failed, in starting a scheme of training for librarianship, to insist



on a basic standard of education less than that prescribed by the N.Z. University entrance examination. Such a standard is insisted on universally by all older associations. With this basis, it is possible for any entrant to the service to become a university graduate, either B.A. or M.A., and so be qualified for the highest positions. We know that the university is anxious to gain new avenues of occupation for its graduates, and I am confident that a working arrangement could be arrived at between the Library Association and the University, so that a qualification of librarian or assistant librarian would have a value enabling its possessor to be recognised the world over.

Last year I submitted for publication in the Bulletin a detailed scheme whereby the University could be linked with the Association. This is still available should you now consider that the subject merits fuller exploration as is suggested in your footnote to "Interested's" letter, and I hope that the correspondence will awaken a dynamic interest in training in librarianship. It is an aspect of the movement which I believe is the most urgent facing public libraries at the present time.

Yours, etc.,

—SYDNEY C. ALLEN.

### BOOK LIST—May, 1940.

No annotations are given where titles are sufficiently self-explanatory, or for lighter fiction by well-known authors. All prices shown are published prices.

#### GENERAL.

Munford, W. A.—Three thousand books for a public library. Grafton.  
7/6 1939 016  
Basic stock for the small library.

#### PHILOSOPHY.

Leon, P.—Plato. Nelson. 2/6 1940 184  
Concise exposition of Plato's main ideas for the layman.

#### SOCIOLOGY.

Fyfe, Hamilton.—The illusion of national character. Watts. 8/6 1940 320.1  
Meade, J. E.—The economic basis of a durable peace. Allen & Unwin. 6/- 1940 330.94  
Advocates an international authority with over-riding powers to secure economic co-ordination.  
Neill, A. S.—The problem teacher. H. Jenkins. 5/- 1940 370.1  
Stimulating comments on education by the author of "A Dominie's log."  
Nicol, J.—Technical schools of New Zealand. N.Z. Council for educational research. 9/-(N.Z.) 1940 378.99  
Historical survey.  
Wood, F. L. W.—New Zealand in the world. Dept. of internal affairs. 5/-(N.Z.) 1940 327.931  
Reviews relations between Britain and New Zealand, and New Zealand's attitude to international affairs.

#### NATURAL SCIENCE.

Smith, B. Webster.—The world under the sea. Hutchinson. 7/6 1940 590  
Readable account of marine life for the general reader.

#### APPLIED SCIENCE.

Beck, S. E.—Ships, boats and craft. H. Jenkins. Beck. 5/- 1940 656  
Over 400 sketches of various types of craft, with short descriptions.

Roe, Sir A.—The world of wings and things. Hurst & Blackett. 7/6 1939 629.13  
Sava, G.—A ring at the door. Faber. 8/6 1940 610

More medical reminiscences by the author of "The healing knife."

Trew, Cecil G.—The story of the dog and his uses to mankind. Methuen. 8/6 1940 637.7  
Includes dog mythology, biological evolution of the dog, new ways of utilising dogs, etc. Illustrated.

#### FINE ARTS.

Emanuel, W. & Dash, F. L.—The all-in-one camera book. Focal press. 6/- 1940 770  
A book for beginners, covering the essentials of photography in simple non-technical language. Well illustrated.  
Gilkison, W. Scott.—Peaks, packs, and mountain tracks. Whitcombe & Tombs. 4/6(N.Z.) 1940 796.5  
Experiences of an alpine climber in New Zealand.

#### LITERATURE.

Duggan, Eileen.—New Zealand poems. Allen & Unwin. 2/- 1940 821  
Marriott, J. W., ed.—The best one-act plays of 1939. Harrap. 1940 822.08

#### TRAVEL.

Bagshawe, T. W.—Two men in the Antarctic. Cambridge Univ. Press. 15/- 1939 919.9  
Account of an expedition to Graham Land in 1921 and 1922. Some scientific material, but includes accounts of whaling, bird life, etc., of general interest.  
Birkby, C.—Limpopo journey. Muller. 12/6 1939 916.8  
Entertaining account of a motor tour from Capetown to the headwaters of the Limpopo, through much back country.